Release of wheat for open sale to Gujarat

1226. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allot at least 1 lakh (one Lakh) tonnes of wheat per month to Gujarat in view of the higher demand in the State; and

(b) whether Government propose to release more wheat to be sold in the open market to bring down the prices of wheat which have gone up in the last one or two months?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): (a) Allocations of wheat from Central Pool for PDS to various States/UTs, including Gujarat, are made on a month to month basis taking into account stock position in the Central Pool, relative needs of States/UTs, offtake trend, market availability and other related factors. The Government of Gujarat has been allotted 95,000 tonnes of wheat from the Central Pool for Public Distribution System for each of the months of February, 1991 and March, 1991.

(b) Food Corporation of India have been authorised to sell a total quantity of 6 lakh tonnes of wheat in March, 1991 as against 5 lakh tonnes in January, 1991, in the open market. The quantity earmarked for Gujarat has also been increased from 17,000 tonnes in January, 1991 to 25,000 tonnes for March, 1991.

Proposals for opening New Railway Divisions

1227. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many proposals for opening New Divisions in Western Railway and other Railways have been received by Government so far;

(b) how many of them have been accepted; and

(c) the criteria adopted in acceptance of these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS): (a) Since January, 1990, the Ministry of Railways have received in all 31 proposals for creating 12 new railway divisional headquarters. Of these, 6 pertain to 2 new divisional headquarters at Gandhidham and Ahmedabad on Western Railway.

(b) Except for the proposal pertaining to creation of a new divisional headquarters at Nanded which had been approved by the Ministry of Railways earlier, no other proposal for creation of a new divisional headquarters is presently under consideration of the Government.

(c) New Railway Divisions are set-up taking into consideration the size, workload, growth and pattern of traffic and other operational requirements of the existing divisions consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency.

Proposals for conversion of Metre Gauge rail lines into Broad Gauge

1228. SHRI JITENDRABHAI LABHSHANKER BHATT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it it a fact that Government received proposals for conversion of several metre gauge lines into broad gauge lines;

(b) if so, how many of them have been accepted; and

(c) what is the reaction of Gotvernment with regard to conversion of Rajkot-Veraval Metre gauge line into the Broad gauge and extension upto Kodinar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present three new gauge conversion projects are under consideration:

(i) Varanasi-Allahabad gauge conversion—132 km.

(ii) Mau-Shahganj & Indara-Phephna—149 km.

(iii) Muzaffarpur-Gorakhpur gauge conversion Spur between Sagauli & Raxaul—339 km.

They have been referred to Planning Commission for their approval and further action for sanctioning these works will be taken on receipt of approval and keeping in view the availability of resources.

(c) The proposal for gauge conversion of Rajkot-Veraval section is under consideration. There is, however, no proposal for its extension upto Kodinar.

Proposal to set up lower-budget hotels on the pattern of Ashok Yatri Niwas at Ahmedabad

1229. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up low-budget hotels on the pattern of Ashok Yatri Niwas at Ahmedabad;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the other places where Government propose to set up such low budget hotels in the State of Gujarat in collaboration with Gujarat State Tourism Development Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI USHA SINGH): (a) There is presently no proposal under consideration of ITDC to set up low budget hotel on the pattern of Ashok Yatri Niwas at Ahmedabad or at any other place in Gujarat.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

Recovery of money from handling agents due to unloading of wagons

1230. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of money to be recovered from the Handling Agents of Steel Authority of India Ltd. operating at Delhi Stock yard, Tuglakabad, due to delay in unloading of wagons during the last six monhts;

(b) what steps are being taken by the Railways to recover the amount from the Handling Agents;

(c) whether any notice have been served on the SAIL/Handling Agents; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS): (a) Demurrage charges accrued due to delay in unloading of wagons are levied on the consignee i.e. the Steel Authority of India and not on the Handling Agents.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steel Authority of India Ltd. has been requested to clear the dues outstanding against them.

(d) Does not arise.

Non-availability of wagons

1231. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Wagons are not allotted to suppliers to supply their materials for Defence production;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the instructions have been issued to Station Masters not to accept the indents of wagons for Government supplies also; and

(c) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.